



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Health Care Quality and Cost Council
Two Boylston Street, 5th floor
Boston, MA 02116**

DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

617-988-3360 • Fax 617-727-7662 • TTY 617-988-3175
www.mass.gov/healthcare

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Chair

KATHARINE LONDON
Executive Director

**Health Care Quality and Cost Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 16, 2008
1:00-3:00 p.m.
One Ashburton Place
21st Floor, Room 1
Boston, MA**

Council Members Present: JudyAnn Bigby, Elizabeth Capstick, James Conway, David Friedman, Kenneth LaBresh, Joseph Lawler, Thomas Lee, Shannon Linde, Katharine London, Robert Seifert, Anne McKenzie representing Dolores Mitchell, and Nancy Schwartz representing Kevin Beagan.

Meeting called to order at 1:06pm

I. Approval Of Minutes of Council Meeting January 2, 2008

The Council approved the minutes of its January 2, 2008 meeting.

Executive Director's Report

- The Council is currently seeking to hire an Executive Administrative Assistant. The job posting was listed under the Mass.gov human resource site. HCQCC received 64 applications and will start interviewing for the position week of January 22, 2008.
- Katharine London reviewed the Council's FY08 spending to date, and the spending plan for the remainder of FY2008. Katharine reviewed the vendor timeline and stated that the Council's biggest expenses are under IT. Katharine recommended that the Council hold off on committing any new spending until the three remaining contracts, for the Analytical Consultant, Operations vendor and Web Application Developer, are awarded.
- Katharine discussed the process for potentially contracting with DHCFP as the Council's Operations Vendor. Because DHCFP is a state agency, the two agencies would enter into an Interagency Service Agreement (ISA). The Council will establish a review team and DHCFP will present their proposal to this team.
- Katharine London announced that the Council received two bids for the Analytical RFP. The review team is currently in the process of reviewing proposals. The interviews have been scheduled for January 30, 2008. Katharine also announced that the Web Application Development RFP is progressing. Friday, January 18, 2008 the Council will host a

bidders conference for the Web Application Development RFP. The proposals are due February 6, 2008.

- Council staff received a response from the Commonwealth's Information Technology Division (ITD) to the Council's request for a waiver from ITD's policy requiring state agencies to use the mass.gov URL, style sheets and formats. ITD will require the Council to use the mass.gov URL. ITD recommended that the Council use the Mass.gov format and use the design proposed by the Communications vendor only for the interactive part of the website. Jim Conway reported that under the reasons proposed by the IT department IHI thought the IT recommendations were beneficial and should be given consideration. JudyAnn Bigby suggest that the Council hold discussion on this matter and plan to schedule a meeting with IT personnel, the Council's communications vendor and other interested parties to discuss ITD's recommendations.
- The Commonwealth will be submitting a proposal to the Commonwealth Fund/Academy Health's *2008 State Quality Improvement Institute*. EOHHS will take the lead on developing this proposal because proposals must be submitted by the Governor's office. The goal of the *State Quality Improvement Institute* is to assist states that are ready to make (or have made) substantial commitments to quality improvement, and facilitate development of concrete plans for further progress. The Grant is an opportunity for technical and not financial assistance.

II. Items for Discussion

A. Update on Claims Data Submissions

Suanne Singer, Maine Health Information Center

- Ms. Singer reviewed the excel spreadsheet depicting the current status of each large payer in terms of testing and timelines associated with the submission of historical data. There are no major problems with the data submission process at present. The Nationwide/Express Scripts issue has been resolved. If the plans follow their timelines we will have a full dataset in February.
- Ms. Singer also provided a synopsis of the submitted quarterly report and focused on the following highlights:
 - a.) Data issues associated with global payments and potential impact on payment/charge ratios.
 - b.) MHIC has received a grant to pilot and address issues of global billing; and
 - c) Payers have been very cooperative in their testing efforts.

B. Discussion of Policy for Penalizing Health Insurance Carriers for Failing to Submit Required Data.

- The Council discussed policy for soliciting health insurance carriers failing to submit required data. Although health plans seem to all be in compliance at the moment,

Council members agreed that it would be important to begin thinking about the process for soliciting plans that fail to meet the requirements.

- Council staff developed a draft compliance policy based on the Council's statute and modeled after Maine's compliance policy. Maine has fined 2 plans in 5 years using this policy. Council members agreed that repeat offenders should be referred directly to the Council, and should not receive repeated letters from the Council chair. There was also a request to clarify the policy to note that the \$50,000 maximum fine is an annual maximum. Katharine will update the draft policy for the next meeting.

C. Discussion of Schedule for Upcoming Council Meeting

- Katharine London reviewed a draft list of suggested speakers for upcoming Council meetings. The Council has requested that experts be invited to present on specific issues and topics. These speakers will help the Council to begin to investigate Goal 1 even before it can hire consultant experts. Commissioner Sarah Iselin is scheduled to present to the Council on February 6, 2008 to discuss cost trends in Massachusetts. Meredith Rosenthal is also scheduled to present on payment reform at the same meeting.
- The Council discussed inviting panels of experts to give specific suggestions in each area. The Council agreed that in moving forward it would be helpful to understand the different perspectives of one issue from experts in the field. David Friedman requested convening the Ad-hoc committee to discuss speakers.
- Jim Conway proposed that the Council look into utilizing UMass Medical School for a case study on Massachusetts's Health Care Quality and Cost Council.

Meeting adjourned 2:46